



A House Somewhere: Tales of Life Abroad (Lonely Planet Journeys)

Don George , Anthony Sattin

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We've all dreamt of escaping to a House Somewhere. In this collection some of the finest names in contemporary travel writing reveal the perils and pleasures of exchanging the familiar for the foreign. Isabel Allende discovers love and paradise in California, Pico Iyer finds home in Japan amidst the alien and indecipherable, and a dank barge on the Seine opens up a new side of Paris for Mort Rosenblum. Revealing the flip side to the dream, relocating to the juicy heart of New York proves fiery for Lily Brett, Chris Stewart is frightened for his life in Andalucia, and the plumbing in William Dalrymple's rooftop Delhi flat is held to ransom by his water-conserving landlady.

A House Somewhere: Tales of Life Abroad (Lonely Planet Journeys) Details

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Author : Don George , Anthony Sattin

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Dianne says

I usually don't read travel writing (I'd rather travel than read about others traveling...) but this was our book group selection for October. It turned out that I really enjoyed many of the stories in the book. The focus was on living in a foreign culture and the unexpected encounters that often occur. The best selections read like good short stories - my favorites which made me laugh out loud were "Digging Mr. Benny's Dead Uncle" by Rolf Potts, "City of Djinn" by Wm. Dalrymple and "Waiting for Juan" by Chris Stewart.

Yuliya says

Nothing like a collection of stories about living abroad to re-awaken not-so-dormant desires to resume what I now see is a substandard peripatetic lifestyle. Nay, not only to resume it, but to make it worthy of, perhaps not publishable work, but at least a blog blurb.

The book's collection make circle-stories of people setting off, stories of people settling in, and stories of people returning, and poignant though it was, the end of this collection inspired in me not a nostalgic homesickness or a homeward journey, but a deep, almost discomforting, feeling that I belonged somewhere else, right now.

This is not a book review. this is a feeling review.

Zoe Richardson says

Only needed to read half for A-level, haven't fully finished analysing etc yet, will update review at the end of the college year!!

Jen Warner says

Short stories are great, because they are self-contained and do a lot with just a little space. These excerpts don't have the same sense of clarity and urgency because they are just pulled from larger works.

Think Isabel Allende did the best job with injecting feeling into the writing.

Lisa says

I picked up this book because I've always wanted to live abroad. Twenty six well known writers (and not as well known) really bring to life what it's like to be immersed in a different culture. All the joys, trials,

tribulations, and lessons learned. It's refreshing to read about living in different parts of the world- Japan, India, Morocco, and many locales, from the writers different sensibilities, perspectives, and writing styles. These diverse pieces are humorous, poignant, warm, and show an intimacy with their "foreign" hosts.

Chloe says

I have had to read this book as part of my college level and it wouldn't usually be something I'd try but I was willing to give it a chance.

After reading the second half of the book, as this was all we were required to read, I find it hard to judge it. This is because of there being many different stories and only small extracts, so while I may have enjoyed one or two of the stories I will admit that had I not needed to carry on reading I wouldn't have.

Not saying that it won't be good to someone else, it just isn't my cup of tea is all. I gave this 1.5 stars and I won't be doing a full review.

Mike Wigal says

These stories of expats getting homes in other countries bore me. The contractor's a thief. Too many friends want to come. "We dined on rosemary and garlic Wheat Thins delicately laced with vintage Cheese-Whiz while simultaneously being accepted into the remote village in France/Italy/Slobbovia." Suddenly when all seems lost it comes together at the last moment. Then you return to New York. Get over yourself and lay off the humble bragging.

Danielle says

Had to read it for school, otherwise I wouldn't have even considered reading it. I'm not going to give this a high rating because I found these stories boring. It's just not my cup of tea.

Though I am travel-writing lovers would, of course, enjoy this book.

I've only read the last half because it's only what's required of me.

Marc says

Published by a guidebook company, this compilation suffers from selection, editing and sequencing issues that would have been dealt with by a traditional publishing house; that being said, Isabel Allende's *A House in Paradise*, Rolf Potts's *Mr. Benny's Dead Uncle* and Karl Taro Greenfeld's *A Loft in Paris* are all worth reading

Kathryn Pharr says

Nice chance to try a bunch of travel books through excerpts

Jenni says

Honestly, I loved the idea of this book more than the execution. It features short excerpts from travel writers describing their lives abroad, with vignettes taking place from Paris to Tuscany to Bangkok to Japan. Some of the stories were entertaining (e.g., the guy that lived on the Seine), while others were not. Generally, there just wasn't enough time to get invested in the characters or their stories—but that's true of all short story collections. I might revisit this again someday, because I really want to like it more.

Heather says

I thought this was a pretty good travel book, and I liked the collection of essays giving different outlooks and writing styles. On the other hand, I was mildly disappointed that most of the essays were the same formulaic of American/British writers living in the tropics for brief periods of time. There were several essays on Asia which I enjoyed, but only two with foreign authors living in the US. I would have liked to see more variety. Where are the people living in Australia? The South Pacific? South America? Eastern Europe?

Still, it was an enjoyable and quick read, great if you enjoy travel writing.

Debbie Robson says

I have decided, after careful deliberation, that I simply can't read any more of this book. Which is embarrassing as I bought it for my best friend. I have struggled and struggled but I just am not interested in the extracts. They might be by famous writers but there's simply nothing to catch my interest. Somehow nearly all (or at least most of the half I read) of the extracts read as if the same person wrote them. Yes, they are about wildly different countries but that's about all. Considering the title I was hoping for passion and excitement, the writer finding the house of their dreams and saying, for instance: give me the house keys and no-one gets hurt but it is all just intellectualism and not much description, at least for this reader. Nothing to take my breath away and start looking at airfare prices.

Christian Schwalbach says

Dreams fuel for those that wonder about faraway lands and cultures vastly different than our own. This collection of narratives by a variety of writers, novelists, journalists, travel writers, and more, is one that I found surprisingly enjoyable, albeit rather generic. Being a compilation, as a whole, it only really shares a theme of what it means to have a home in a culture not of your own, but I enjoyed reading of the different

perspectives each author brought to the ideas of "home" "roots", and "culture". Anybody who has ever gazed on the horizon and wondered what it would be like to live far beyond your own shores would enjoy this book, as it is travel writing, but with a bit of a different flair. "Sedentary Travel", perhaps.

3/5 stars. Points for author diversity, personal narratives, demerits for lacking originality, being of a niche genre (minor nitpicks admittedly)

Moonstone says

Enjoyed the first few stories about life in other countries but then it fizzled out for me. Some I found quite boring.
